



In reply refer to:
FWS/R8/ES

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pacific Southwest Region
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825



AUG 20 2018

Rich Wade
Chair, Forest Practice Committee
Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460

Dear Chairman Wade,

Thank you for your August 9, 2018 letter regarding the Northern spotted owl (NSO) and future collaboration with the Board of Forestry (Board). We fully support the Board's review of its rules in an effort to improve efficiency in permitting forest management practices within the range of NSO, and ensuring that timber harvest operations will not result in "take" of NSO and conserve habitat for NSO populations.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is very interested in exploring the questions posed in your letter and others with the Board, our state partners, and representatives of timber harvesting companies. Due to the inherent complexity of the issues at hand, we feel the most productive way to approach the discussions of forest policy management is together, in a collaborative manner. As such, we graciously accept your invitation to attend and participate in the Board's Forest Practice Committee meeting on August 21, and subsequent meetings where we can continue the dialogue and look for solutions that meet the needs of stakeholders.

We have assembled a team of Service staff to evaluate your specific questions and others to ensure the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a good partner in forest management, and Northern spotted owl conservation.

We look forward to working with the members of the Forest Practice Committee in the near future on these important issues, and continuing the discussion at the August 21st Forest Practice Committee meeting. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience if you would like to discuss this matter further at (916) 414-6533 or Michael_Senn@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Deputy Assistant Regional Director